

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05

PC-01 /060 W

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R 251540Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9448

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 0783

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR XK CS

SUBJECT: MEETING OF DEFENSE MINISTER OF
CENTRAL AMERICA

REF: STATE 035457

MANAGUA 0719

1. COSTA RICAN PRESS COVERAGE OF THE DEFENSE MINISTERS
MEETING (CONDENCA) IN MANAGUA, FEBRUARY 5, REPEATED THE
BISIC POINTS EXPRESSED IN REFTEL MANAGUA. "LA REPUBLICA"
REPORTED THAT THE THREE MAJOR TOPICS OF THE MEETING
WERE CENTRAL AMERICAN CIVIL DEFENSE, INFORMATION
EXCHANGE ON IMMIGRATION AND CRIMINAL PROBLEMS,
AND THE "GUERRILLA ISSUE." THE ARTICLE POINTED OUT
THAT DETAILS OF THE DISCUSSIONS ON GUERRILLAS WERE NOT
REVEALED TO THE PRESS BECAUSE THEY WERE
"CONFIDENTIAL AND SECRET."

2. COSTA RICAN PRESS INTEREST IN THE MEETING
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FOCUSSED ON WHY MINISTER OF PUBLIC SECURITY

CHARPENTIER ATTENDED THE MEETING AND WHAT EFFECT THE MEETING WOULD HAVE ON THE FUTURE OF THE SANDINISTA WHO HAD SOUGHT POLITICAL ASYLUM IN THE COSTA RICAN EMBASSY IN MANAGUA. IN AN INTERVIEW WITH PLN-ORIENTED "EXCELSIOR," MINISTER CHARPENTIER EXPLAINED HIS REASONS FOR ATTENDING THE MEETING (ONLY AS AN OBSERVER) AFTER MANY YEARS OF COSTA RICAN ABSENCE. CHARPENTIER EXPLAINED THAT HIS MEETING WITH THE CENTRAL AMERICAN DEFENSE MINISTERS IN NO WAY COMPROMISED COSTA RICA'S NON-MILITARIST TRADITION. RATHER, HE REPORTEDLY SAID, "I WOULD BE A VERY IRRESPONSIBLE MINISTER OF SECURITY IF I DID NOT CONCERN MYSELF WITH KNOWING WHAT WAS HAPPENING OUTSIDE OUR BORDERS."

3. IN REGARD TO THE SANDINISTA IN THE COSTA RICAN EMBASSY, IT IS NOT KNOWN WHETHER CHARPENTIER OR ODUBER, IN HIS VISIT TO MANAGUA THE FOLLOWING DAY, NEGOTIATED THE SAFE CONDUCT THAT WAS GRANTED BY THE GON TO THE SANDINISTA. HOWEVER, MINISTER CHARPENTIER CONFIRMED SUBSEQUENTLY TO AN EMBASSY OFFICER THAT THE SANDINISTA SUBSEQUENTLY LEFT NICARAGUA AND PASSED THROUGH COSTA RICA TO EUROPE.

4. MINISTER CHARPENTIER ALSO TOLD A MISSION SOURCE THAT THE MAJOR CONCERN ON THE GON'S PART AT THE MEETING WAS INDEED THE SANDINISTA ISSUE AS REPORTED IN REFTEL MANAGUA. CHARPENTIER CONFIRMED THAT THE NICARAGUAN MINISTER OF DEFENSE STRESSED THE THEME THAT THE SANDINISTA ATTACK IN DECEMBER IS PART OF A CUBAN INTERNATIONAL THREAT TO ALL OF CENTRAL AMERICA. HOWEVER, CHARPENTIER SAID THAT "COSTA RICA DOES NOT WANT TO DANCE TO THAT TUNE."
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